



State of Wisconsin  
2015 - 2016 LEGISLATURE

LRB-3663/1  
CMH:cjs

## 2015 ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION 83

November 3, 2015 - Introduced by Representatives RODRIGUEZ, BALLWEG, CONSIDINE, DANOU, GOYKE, HORLACHER, JOHNSON, MILROY, MURPHY, POPE, ROHRKASTE, SPREITZER and SUBECK, cosponsored by Senators L. TAYLOR, BEWLEY, HARRIS DODD, LASSA and OLSEN. Referred to Committee on Rules.

1     **Relating to:** recognizing November 2015 as Prematurity Awareness Month.

2             Whereas, the March of Dimes Foundation is a pioneer in improving the health  
3     of infants and women of childbearing age by preventing birth defects, premature  
4     birth, and infant mortality; and

5             Whereas, the March of Dimes was founded by President Franklin D. Roosevelt  
6     in 1938 to fight polio, and funded the development of two vaccines — still in use today  
7     — that virtually eliminated the crippling disease; and

8             Whereas, the March of Dimes in 1958, having achieved its initial mission,  
9     shifted its attention from polio to the prevention of birth defects, and through federal  
10    and state advocacy led the way in establishing a nationwide network of birth defects  
11    monitoring programs and research centers; and

12            Whereas, the March of Dimes has undertaken decades of groundbreaking  
13    research in maternal and child health, which has led to the discovery of lifesaving  
14    products and tests such as surfactant therapy for premature infants and tests to  
15    identify life-threatening birth defects; and

1           Whereas, the March of Dimes was a pioneer in the support of newborn  
2     screening, urging Congress to pass and fund the Newborn Screening Saves Lives Act,  
3     which in 2008 established national guidelines on the conditions states should  
4     include in newborn programs, and through state advocacy ensured that every state  
5     screens all newborns for that core set of conditions; and

6           Whereas, the March of Dimes actively advocated for the reauthorization of  
7     federal funds for the Children’s Health Insurance Program which covered 167,292  
8     children in our state in 2014, ensuring vital access to pediatric healthcare services;  
9     and

10          Whereas, the March of Dimes is a long-time advocate for access to health care  
11     for women of childbearing age, infants, children, and families, ensuring they have  
12     access to private and public health coverage under private coverage, the State  
13     Children’s Health Insurance Program, Medicaid, Title V Block Grant, and the  
14     Affordable Care Act; and

15          Whereas, the March of Dimes in 2003 launched the Prematurity Campaign to  
16     address the crisis of premature birth and help families have full-term, healthy  
17     babies, and authored the Premature Research Expansion and Education Act for  
18     Mothers (PREEMIE) Act, which Congress enacted in 2006, to expand research,  
19     education, and services to fight premature births; and

20          Whereas, 6,124 babies are born preterm based on obstetrical estimate in the  
21     state of Wisconsin representing 9.2 percent of all state births; and

22          Whereas, the March of Dimes has set a national goal of reducing preterm births  
23     to 5.5 percent in every state by 2030, which will result in a healthier start in life for  
24     tens of thousands of infants; and

Whereas, the March of Dimes Wisconsin Chapter has worked extensively to promote Newborn Screening in the state of Wisconsin; and

Whereas, the March of Dimes Wisconsin Chapter looks forward to partnering with the Wisconsin State Legislature, in response to the continued crisis of premature birth; and

Whereas, the month of November is recognized as World Prematurity Awareness Month to bring about recognition of this global health crisis, and November 17 is recognized as Prematurity Awareness Day across the United States; and

Whereas, the March of Dimes sponsors numerous programs to support healthy pregnancies and infants, such as its work to prevent early elective deliveries and the NICU Family Support program; and

Whereas, the March of Dimes and its volunteers continue to advocate for national and state health policies and programs that affect women of childbearing age, infants, children, and families; now, therefore, be it

***Resolved by the assembly, the senate concurring, That*** the legislature hereby proclaims November 2015 as Prematurity Awareness Month in Wisconsin.

**(END)**